



SUPERFUND FACT SHEET

Brooks Foundry Albion, Michigan



July 1989

U.S. EPA continues clean up at Brooks Foundry site

This fact sheet

- ▷ provides site background/history.
- ▷ describes the Action Memorandum.
- ▷ reviews removal action.
- ▷ identifies contacts.
- ▷ contains a glossary of technical terms.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has completed the initial phase of clean-up activities at the Brooks Foundry site in Albion, Michigan. In April 1989, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) asked U.S. EPA to assist in the cleanup.

Activities will be funded by the U.S. EPA Superfund Removal Program as an expedited removal action. The removal action will alleviate potential threats to public health through contact with toxic materials.

This fact sheet will describe the site background, preliminary test findings, and hazards present, and outline an action plan to clean up the contaminated areas. Technical terms will be highlighted in bold print and explained in the Glossary.

Site background

Brooks Foundry manufactured counterweights at 1712 East Michigan Avenue in Albion, Michigan, from 1942 to February 1989. In September 1987, U.S. EPA's Technical Enforcement Support Division conducted an inspection which found that hazardous wastes were being generated and improperly managed by Brooks Foundry. In July 1987, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) inspectors performed an inspection at the facility. One of the samples collected near the transformers revealed soil containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

On March 21, 1989, Brooks Foundry officials filed a Chapter 7 bankruptcy petition with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. In April 1989, after receiving a complaint that the facility contained flammable materials, officials from the Sheridan/Albion Township Fire Department and MDNR inspected the facility. During this inspection, the presence of hundreds of drums of suspected ignitable paints, paint wastes, acids, oxidizers, and petroleum products was confirmed. A significant natural gas leak was also discovered. The Sheridan/Albion Township Fire Chief immediately closed the facility because of the hazards associated with the facility. The natural gas supply to the facility was shut off at this time.

U.S. EPA asked to conduct removal action

On April 14, 1989, U.S. EPA was requested by MDNR to conduct a site assessment. During the inspection the uncontrolled condition of wastes at the site was confirmed. On April 19, further U.S. EPA tests revealed the presence of ignitable and corrosive wastes in 8 of 11 drums sampled.

The Brooks Foundry site is fenced and a security service has been employed to provide site surveillance. However, there has been vandalism at the site and the potential for continued vandalism remains. The size of the facility (approximately 40 acres) does not allow for continuous perimeter

monitoring. Entry by persons onto the Brooks Foundry site creates the potential for inhalation and direct contact with hazardous substances such as flammable organic solvents, acids, oxidizers and heavy metals.

Action Memorandum issued

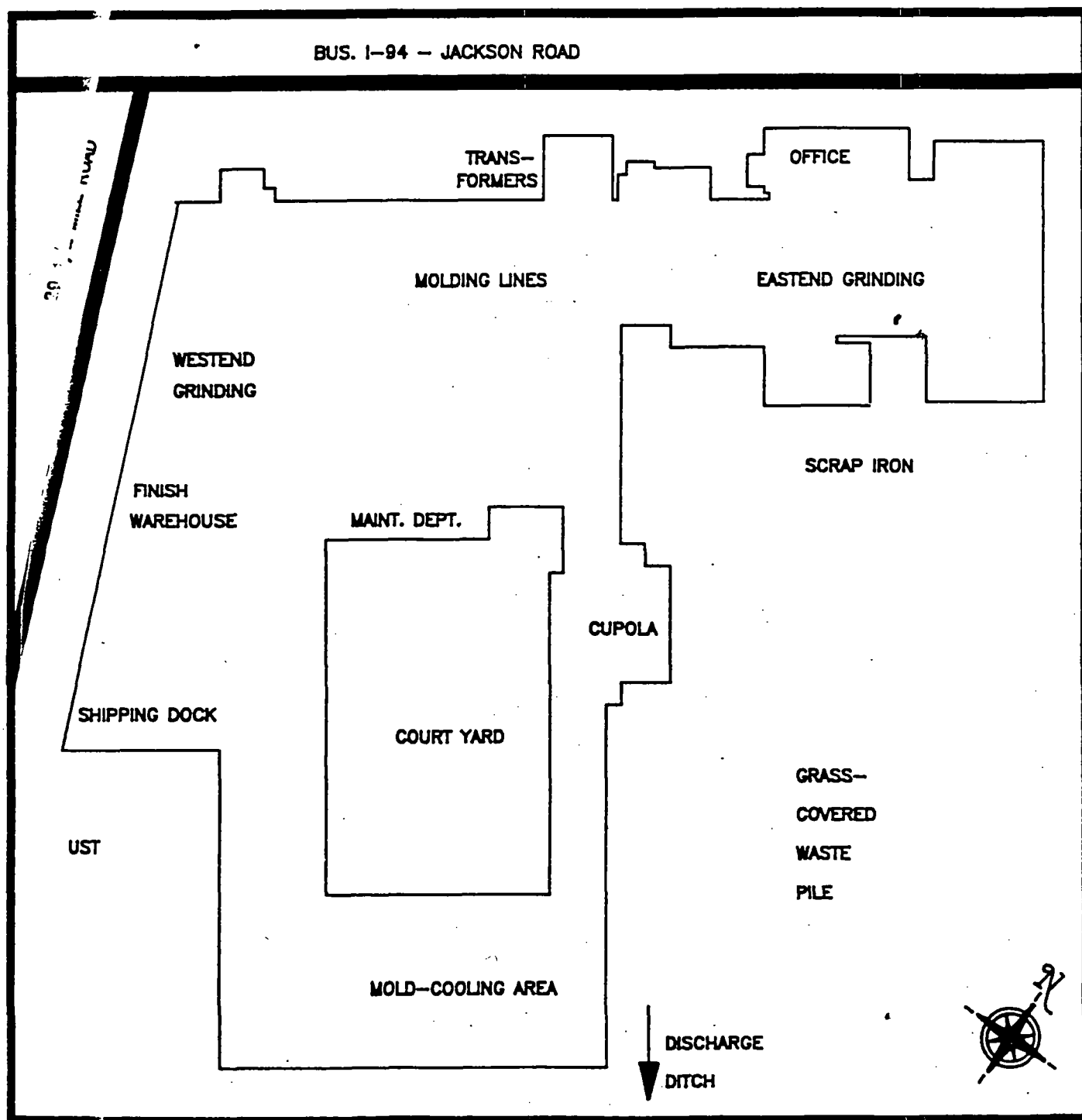
Because of the hazards present to public

health and the environment, U.S. EPA issued an Action Memorandum on April 2, 1989, to establish Brooks Foundry's eligibility for a Removal Action under the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund). The site qualifies for CERCLA funds because the potential for exposure to hazardous substances exists because of the potential discharge into the sewer system and the Kalamazoo

River.

The highly corrosive acids and ignitable wastes pose a threat to the nearby community. If a fire or explosion occurs, the subsequent release of chemical vapors and gases which might migrate off-site presents a potential health hazard. The site is one quarter of a mile from an elementary school and one mile from a college. Between 1,000 and 5,000 people are near the site on a daily basis.

Brooks Foundry Site Diagram



Removal activities

In order to mitigate the hazards at the site, U.S. EPA has proceeded with removal activities. With the exception of removal of waste from the site, five stages of the removal program have been implemented. Phase six of the removal activities is underway. Listed below are the six steps taken by U.S. EPA:

- 1) Develop and implement site safety and security measures.
- 2) Implement an air monitoring program.
- 3) Identify, stage, and sample all containers (drums and tanks) of Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) wastes and hazardous substances.
- 4) Identify and characterize PCB items/wastes at the facility.
- 5) Package, transport, and dispose of all of the above wastes and their respective containers at secure off-site disposal facilities.
- 6) Perform a limited extent-of-contamination study of the entire facility in order to evaluate the appropriateness of additional removal actions and the need for long-term remedial activities.

The estimated cost for the cleanup is \$1,123,000. Under CERCLA, U.S. EPA will try to recover the costs of the cleanup from previous owners and operators at the site.

U.S. EPA Toll Free Number

1-800-621-8431
Monday - Friday
9:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.
Central Time

Glossary

Acids - Organic acids are highly corrosive chemicals which, when mixed with certain chemicals such as those at the Brooks Foundry site, can result in a fire, explosion, and/or the release of toxic fumes.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA, known as Superfund) was enacted by Congress in 1980 to respond directly to hazardous waste problems that may pose a threat to the environment. The U.S. EPA administers the program. Remedial Actions are taken when long-term actions are required to clean up a site. Removal Actions are begun in cases of imminent danger to the public and the environment to bring the situation under control by stabilizing or stopping the release of the hazardous substances. The U.S. EPA considers a variety of factors to identify either the remedial or removal line of action.

Heavy metals - Heavy metals are metals such as lead, chromium, cadmium, and cobalt that can be toxic at relatively low levels of concentrations.

Organic solvents - This is a term used to designate chemicals and substances that contain carbon. Organic solvents are capable of dissolving substances into other solutions. Many solvents are flammable and toxic to varying degrees.

Oxidizers - Oxidizing materials are compounds that spontaneously evolve oxygen either at room temperature or under slight heating. When mixed with certain chemicals, spontaneous combustion can occur. When oxidizers mix with other chemicals, the release of toxic vapors can occur.

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) PCBs are a family of organic compounds used since 1926 in electric transformers as insulators and coolants, in lubricants, carbonless copy paper, adhesives, and caulking compounds. They are also produced in certain combustion processes. The U.S. EPA banned the use of PCBs in 1976. Long-term exposure to PCBs can cause liver damage and cancer.

For More Information

If you would like additional information about the Brooks Foundry site, you may contact the individuals listed below or call the U.S. EPA directly at its toll free number.

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Maryann Croce

Community Relations Coordinator

Office of Public Affairs 5PA-14

U.S. EPA - Region 5

230 South Dearborn Street

Chicago, Illinois 60604

Mailing List Opportunity

To be placed on the mailing list to receive information regarding the Brooks Foundry site, please complete and mail this form to:

Maryann Croce
Community Relations Coordinator
Office of Public Affairs 5PA-14
U.S. EPA - Region 5
230 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Please place my name on the Brooks Foundry site mailing list.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

AFFILIATION: _____

TELEPHONE: () _____



Official Business
Penalty for Private Use
\$300

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 5
Office of Public Affairs (5PA-14)
230 South Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60604